

Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee Meeting
Summary
May 15, 2008

Members Present: Jon Lourie, Nancy Schwiesow and Pete Esker

Members Absent: Barbara Henry, Bob Middleton, Mary Pat Spon and Carmen Camacho

Guest: Joan Honeyman, Don Hague, Neal L. Blake, Jennifer Nettles, Commander Don Johnson, Sandra Pereira, John Marcolin

Staff: Gary Stith Vicki Lockerman, Mel Tull, Jerry Sanford and Susan Hoffmann

Welcome/Introduction – Jon Lourie called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes The April minutes were not adopted but there were no objections.

Chairs Report

Jon Lourie reported that:

- SILVERDOCS – June 16-23
- Silver Spring Swings Free Summer Concert Series – June 12 –August 14
- Attended the last Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board meeting and there was a lot of discussion about the library.

Police Update

Commander Johnson reported that:

- Robberies have been at the same level for the last 4 months and we have had a few commercial robberies. More street encountered type robberies are occurring and our plain clothes team devotes most of its time to capturing those individuals to help combat this issue we have our Police Community Action Team, (PCAT) working on Thursday and Friday evenings.
- Crime trend remains with vehicle thefts and we continue to distribute the brochure.
- Neighborhoods around the CBD are being affected by an increase in daytime residential burglaries, this is an offensive act. Several arrests have been made and we will be able to close about 30 cases.
- Drug activity is not too bad and we have made some arrest but it is not a huge problem. Our Special Assignment Team (SAT) team makes a lot of arrest and usually make ten drug arrest for every one robbery arrest they make.
- We are stepping up patrol on Ellsworth and working with the Peterson Group.

Jon Lourie remarked on an article in the paper of the worst pedestrian intersections in Montgomery County and that this intersection here was listed as the most difficult to navigate. This is a long standing issue because it is a State Road and it seems like we never get moving in the right direction.

ACTION

Gary Stith responded that Tom Harmon does a lot of enforcement activity at this intersection on a regular basis so we will invite him to SSUDAC next meeting to discuss.

Commander Johnson stated they now do MCP stat which we have to report to our District Commander and Chief once a month and one of the topic reported on is the top 10 intersections for traffic collision and what is being done to resolve those issues.

Update Green Space Plan for Silver Spring CBD

John Marcolin, Planner Coordinator/Urban Design Community Based Planning Division and Sandra Pereira, Senior Planner, Development Review gave a presentation on Green Space for the Silver Spring CBD a few of the highlights are listed below:

- This study responds to two sets of issues affecting the Central Business District (CBD). The demand for large green space appears to be higher than the supply. The demand for such spaces was evident at the public hearing for the Silver Spring Civic Building when numerous community members opposed having hardscape at Veterans Plaza in favor of a large centrally located green open space. In the South Silver Spring, the community expressed concern about the lack of useable green spaces and the difficulty in accessing Jesup Blair Park, the largest public park, on the east side of Georgia Avenue. Over 800 new residential units have been approved in this area of the CBD, which requires planning for green spaces as amenity areas as relief in the urban fabric.
- This also responds to a specific urban form that is envisioned for the Silver Spring CBD. The development of optional method projects must be balanced by the provision of significant green spaces at appropriate locations. Pending legislation may allow such spaces to be provided off-site. The desired urban form consists of a hierarchy of green spaces that vary in size, character, and location, and that are linked together by green streets. The resulting green space network provides visual, recreational, and environmental relief from the urban fabric at the same time that it encourages pedestrian.
- We presented these recommendations to the Board on April 24, 2008 and they approved for us to circulate and present to the public for public review and comment.
- In response to these circumstances the Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD identifies opportunities for creating green spaces in the CBD and makes recommendations on specific sites that should be considered for potentially large green spaces.
The Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD addresses multi-faceted problem:
 - Implementation of Sector Plan vision not achieved
 - Too few significant green spaces
 - Uneven distribution of green spaces
 - Inadequate connectivity between green spaces
 - Minimal environmental benefits in existing open space
- The study identified opportunities to address the problem in Silver Spring;
 - green spaces over parking facilities,
 - urban stream restoration
 - green streets and
 - property assemblage

- Existing mechanisms or tools have helped to create the existing green space infrastructure. These can be further enhanced to help implement larger green spaces in the Silver Spring CBD. The major tools are:
 - Optional method of development,
 - offsite transfer of open space,
 - open space amenity fund,
 - public projects,
 - leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED), and
 - Recreation Guidelines.

For complete comprehensive details on Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD please visit <http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2008/agenda20080424e.html> and hard copy will be available at the June meeting.

Discussion

Nancy Schwiesow asked about the green space by the Giant, where would it be?

Sandra Pereira responded that they would suggest parking be underground or structured parking and recognize that parking is very important. The land is in such a prime location that we could use it for recreational and amenity space.

Jon Lourie asked about the proposal for Ripley District and what land are they proposing.

John Marcolin responded part of it is Progress Place and Pyramid Atlantic.

Jon Lourie stated that the parking garage in South Silver Spring and the Giant Blair Towers is easy to understand but on Fenton Village does that means taking a certain property to do that.

Sandra Pereira responded that a number of the recommendations will involve a public/private partnership. In Fenton Village there is the Montgomery County Parking Lot 3 and which is the public contribution and the private sector would be developed around that.

Gary Stith responded we are working with the adjacent property owner, Bob Hillerson and the County owns the surface parking lot. There is a Zoning Text Amendment to allow additional height for workforce housing units and the building would be built above 90 feet only to accommodate the additional workforce housing.

Jon Lourie stated that the Silver Spring Green Space Plan presentation was fabulous especially the three dimensional plans of the models and are great ideas. The Giant parking lot would be a wonderful opportunity and to think of some of these parking lots becoming green spaces would be a wonderful transformation for Silver Spring. Will there be any green space at Silver Place.

John Marcolin responded that green space at Silver Place did not score really high because there is a park right across the street on the edge of the CBD but Silver Place will have green space.

Gary Stith suggested having another discussion on Green Space in Silver Spring at the July meeting when we have a full Committee. What type of time frame are you on?

John Marcolin responded that they would like to have a good chunk of this done by July.

Sandra Pereira stated they have presented the draft plan to the Board and in July we will present the final plan but we will not go to the Board if we do not have good input. We will present to the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board's CED Committee next Wednesday.

Jon Lourie stated the extra height on Fenton Street has been controversial but the idea of providing a significant public benefit to offset higher building is very important and the mid-block walkway and/or street is a creative idea.

Neal Blake stated that the Lee Cohen Lot reflected on the presentation should be a zero.

Ripley Street Project (a.k.a Midtown Silver Spring Presentation Public Park) Update

Don Hague, Home Properties, William Cochran, Artist and Joan Honeyman, Landscape Architect gave an overview on the Midtown project on Ripley Street Project as follows:

- We are developing 1200 East West Highway and Home Properties acquired site from Kettler (formerly KSI) March 2008. It's received project plan and preliminary approval and is an optional method project for approximately 310 units plus 5400 square feet more retail and appropriate parking to code and basically it would be 360 parking spaces underground. Project Plan submitted for Falkland North parcel redevelopment and the Planning Board hearing on historic questions is scheduled for June 12.
- Home Properties NYSE-listed Estate Investment Trust (symbol "HME"). They own 3,501 apartments in Montgomery County, approximately 8,500 in DC region.
- We are here today to discuss design ideas for public open space/public park and request a support letter from the Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee.
- Project Status – Final Site Plan was submitted in March. Targeting July hearing at Planning Board. Once final site plan is approved we will move on with the building design. Looking at a start date latter part of 2009. We got DRC comments back from the County and one of the things Park and Planning commented on was our open space which is about 7200 square feet it is a pocket park we had worked on hard for a concept of this park and Park and Planning and DRC comments did not quite capture the vision and they were focusing on making it more of a recreational space whereas we have it as a different type of space entirely which is partly reflecting the size and the idea we feel Silver Spring would benefit from a highly designed park and you can not do everything in a small amount of space and it is on 7200 square feet. I spoke with Gary Stith and he suggested that we come in and present this to your Committee.
- Our Design Team – Landscape Architect: Joan Honeyman, Jordan Honeyman, Artist William Cochran, William Cochran Studio, Frederick, MD.
- Concepts – Public open space required for optional method project, significant and unique piece of public art, ties to Arts District, Tribute to Rachel Carson, "Learning opportunity" Rachel Carson and environment and Place for people to meet, socialize outdoors in an urban pocket park.

William Cochran, Artist for the project gave a presentation on work he has completed and plans for the Midtown Project in Silver Spring as follows:

- We are talking about public art installation and a park that has cultural and educational amenity. I work in paint and glass and we are very interested in the play of light on form both with painting and glass.
- The Community Bridge located in Frederick Maryland is a painted illusion on masonry so there is no dimension to the image. These have historic roots in the since of place that makes Frederick unique. When you come to the end of the bridge it looks strange and distorted but there is no distortion at all to the image. The project is unusual because it engaged the community by the thousands directly in the creative process and speaks with a collective voice. There are tours of this project of corporate and schools groups on a regular basis and it helped to catalyze the development \$300 million dollars in public/private development.
- A small area can be turned into an outdoor museum that is highly interactive to people both day and night, the pavers are loaded with text from the community that illuminates at night and we try to use recycled materials in the project.
- I was selected through the competition by KSI Services, Inc., as the public artist for its new Midtown Silver Spring project and designed a signature work of sculpture in stacked glass as the focal point for a new urban park in this rapidly transforming neighborhood. The plan also includes numerous ground-plane etched pavers. Slated for completion in 2008, the sculpture is a tribute to the founder of the contemporary environmental movement, scientist and writer Rachel Carson, a longtime Silver Spring resident. The glass sculpture resembles two standing walls of water with the split profile of Carson carved deeply into them. Viewers can walk between the luminous columns, which respond to changing light conditions by day and illuminate at night. The project has been approved by the Public Art Review panel and will stand at the heart of the Silver Spring Arts & Entertainment District.

Joan Honeyman, Landscape Architect had several drawings showing what the park would look like. This a small park only 7200 square feet and when started looking at the park we thought it would be a small green open space being used for the entire community of all ages because it is a small area and we did not want to put too many activities in it and we connected with William Carson and ended up with a beautiful sculpture. As part of the park we decided to try and design some of the elements in the park around the sculpture and how the light plays off the sculpture and the topic of the sculpture. Coming in from Ripley Street there is a small plaza and coming from Dixon Avenue there will be a small plaza the sculpture will have paving around it so it is easily viewable for the public and a green space to be used for any number of activities but passive activities the structure on the side are medal armors that we would use for shade structure with benches and paving underneath. There is a raised planter wall around the park.

When we started working with William Carson and the sculpture and the enter play of light and shadow on the park itself we designed a series of arbors that are like two waffles on top of each other so when the light filters through them you get a lot of light and shadow underneath. We are thinking of using permanent pavers to alleviate the run-off in the park and some of the pavers could have inscriptions to use as an educational tool where people can look at what Rachel Carson said and other environmentalist in the pass look at sculpture and create a viewing area. At this point we are looking at this park as more

of a passive activity park and the sculpture as the centerpiece. These are schematics and we are still working out some of the details but the basic plan is pretty much set.

Pete Esker asked how they will handle graffiti and vandalism. Jon Lourie and I have been involved with the Veterans Memorial which is thick glass illuminated panels etched and that was one of our concerns.

William Carson responded the material is glass and durable and you can spray wash it.

Jon Lourie stated that he liked the proposal for artwork in the project but is not sure when it comes to the hardscape. I understand getting something that meanders through on the edge and obviously there is more design that will go into this and if it's too difficult they will walk through the grass which needs to be simplified. We don't have a quorum to write a letter of support today and if you need a letter you could attend our June meeting.

Silver Spring Library

Gary Stith reported that:

- The discussions between the County Executive and County Council revolved around the issue of design. Council wanted to make sure the site held the library which is 42,000 square feet and had space set aside to accommodate the Purple Line station. The County Executive and Council agreed that they don't want to do anything to eliminate the Purple Line option. Part of this site was acquired with housing initiative funds and the intention was always to replace the apartment building on Bonifant. This site could accommodate 180,000 square feet under the current zoning and the library only takes 42,000 square feet leaving a significant amount of zoning capacity for residential development. There is interest in finding a relocation site for Pyramid Atlantic because the Ripley Street widening would basically eliminate the building. One concept is that we accommodate space on this site for Pyramid Atlantic as part of the project. Pyramid will sell their property and use the money to build and we would provide a shell. The only problem was that Council felt like the development needed to be done in a way that the housing was physically over the library which originally was a concept and I thought you would have to do in order to maximize the development on the site.
- The layout on pages 20 and 21 is not a design but a concept plan to demonstrate the massing that could accommodate the development on the site. The concept is to have the library as a separate stand-alone facility with an arts space over it and community use and retail space underneath to raise it above where the Purple Line has to go through. The housing could be done as a separate building because if you put the housing over the top of the library then the process for working with a developer, the financing and the market being in place could delay the library significantly and the library has to be a function of the housing part. Plus if the housing and library are developed together it would need to be done under Optional Method whereas if the library is stand-alone and we could show a clear bright line between the library and the residential, the library could be reviewed as Mandatory Referral. Our experience has been that Optional Method review would be a significant delay and Mandatory Referral would be a shorter delay. Mandatory Referral is not subject to any kind of legal action in court.
- Council and Executive have agreed to the language that is included in the capital budget. As follows: "Funds appropriated for this project in FY09 or previously must be used to develop multiple concept designs for mixed use of the complete parcel of land purchased through this PDF

for the Silver Spring Library. Alternative concepts must include a single mixed-use building that includes the library, affordable housing, retail, arts, and community use; at least one option that maximizes density under current zoning; and options for use of any remaining space, such as park or green space, public plaza, and retail. Concepts must also accommodate future development of the Purple Line with alternatives for the relationship of the building or buildings to the Purple Line. Each concept must show how it integrates with the sector plan vision for Fenton Village. Concepts must be developed through a charrette process for seeking and incorporating community input into the designs. The Executive must provide written progress reports to the Council by September 15, 2008, January 15, 2009, and March 15, 2009, and once at the end of conceptual design." The Executive said we will come up with different concepts and include a concept that has a single building even though there are reasons why it is difficult to develop it that way and cause delays. The last piece of property the County needed to acquire that we put in condemnation that the County has come to agreement on price with the property owner so we won't go through the condemnation process. We will move forward on the design process and the first step in that process is the selection of an architect and going through some charrette processes with the community.

Jon Lourie stated at the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board meeting Monday night regarding the Library was the issue of how do we bring community involvement in this process and the charrette process. We discussed the design competition of the Civic Building and how it brought to the table a very creative and nationally recognized design team which once built will make a huge impact on Silver Spring. We need to have discussion on how to move forward and the idea of having a community task force similar in nature to what we did for the Civic Building where we had all the community as a stakeholder, along with County staff representing County Executive and Council and applicable other Departments of the County to help shepherd this forward because this is a critical project for Silver Spring.

Gary Stith stated that Council did not require a design competition.

Pete Esker stated that this issue has been going on for year and another year of delay is what we don't need and there is no way the library will be designed without public input.

Jon Lourie stated that it would have been great if the acquisition of property had happened earlier but on the other hand I want the best for Silver Spring.

Gary Stith responded putting together a group of stakeholders for community participation in the design process has been done before. I will make that recommendation. We are conducting an internal meeting May 28 and meeting with Park and Planning in early June to talk about processes.

Fenton Village Overlay ZTA

Gary Stith reported that:

- The hearing before full Council on is June 17, after that Park and Planning will have a hearing and be taking testimony. The County Executive asked for this ZTA to be considered by Council because he wants this to be part of the affordable housing initiative. When the workforce housing was created 2 years ago by Council they added to the CBD 1 and CBD 2 zones that they would require workforce housing in those zones but when you did the workforce housing and 10% was

the requirement that you got additional height above minimum heights that's allowed up to the maximum height in the zone but only to accommodate that additional workforce housing this was not a density bonus only a height bonus and this works in those zone. In the Fenton Village area which is an underlying zone in CBD 1. The overlay zone creates a height cap and that is the only overlay zone over those two types of underlying zones that does this so you don't get additional height in the Fenton Village area. We are working with Bob Hillerson on the Lot 3 project and the County wants the project to have workforce housing as well as the new library site and there are other projects in Fenton Village that may develop over time and the County Executive wants this allowance for additional height to accommodate workforce housing to be added to the Fenton Village overlay zone as it is with the other CBD 1 and CBD 2 zones.

Jon Lourie stated that the Committee had an extensive conversation about this issue at the last meeting and did not come to any sort of consensus. In light of the green presentation received today from Park and Planning the idea of extra height is not a bad thing if it connected to public amenity in terms of meaningful green space, retail and an active urban environment. My concern was that it did not connect to any of this and focused on the workforce housing which is fine but it needed to be broaden.

Parking Update Garage 21

Rick Siebert reported that:

- United Therapeutics began Phase 2 construction and when they did that they uncovered more of the foundation of the garage and structural defects in the foundation. In accordance with our agreement with United Therapeutics the County looked at it and we jointly came up with a fix and there is temporary work being done so it does not delay United Therapeutics project. We started an emergency procurement action that will cost approximately \$200K and we will do some serious foundation work and are starting immediately. The emergency procurement went through we are working on a task order for a construction company to work on it. We have to remove part of the floor slab on the ground level to get to our own foundation and change columns all the way up through the garage to transfer the load because we can't get underneath and build the columns. It appears Council is going to approve our Capital Project for the renovation of the garage and it is going to proceed probably as soon as this work is completed. The procurement process would not let us go any faster than that anyway because we need the money first before we can start so we are still on scheduled and will close the garage permanently in the September timeframe and closed for 15 to 18 months to be completed with new facades and new upper decks. Local businesses will be notified and alternate parking is a block away in Garage 2.

Arts and Entertainment Advisory Committee

Gary Stith reported that:

- The Purpose Statement for the Silver Spring Arts and Entertainment Advisory District Committee is located on page 46 of the packet. This Advisory Committee is being created by the County Executive specifically for the Arts and Entertainment District and not created by Council and code. We advertised and 46 people applied and they were fascinating and had very interesting talents that we did not know existed in Silver Spring. We will work with the Arts and Entertainment District Advisory Committee to come up with the kinds of things they think we need to do and the task they are doing is to advise us and the County Executive on how to use the Arts and Entertainment more effectively to maintain economic activity in downtown Silver

Spring. The designation by the State is an economic development and not an arts program. The County Executive has asked that we recruit some young people so we sent this to various arts organizations that work with youth.

Marketing and Special Event

Susan Hoffmann reported that the summary report is located on page 46 of the packet and distributed the flyer and brochure.

Urban District

Jerry Sanford reported that:

- The summary report is located on pages 50 and 51 of the packet.
- May 16 - Bike to Work Day here at Discovery.
- June 8 – South Silver Spring Neighborhood Association 2nd Annual Block Party 11: 00-5:00 p.m., they are combining it with the Gateway Group and doing an Acorn Market.
- Summer Flower installation began this week and median will began next week. We will not do as many median this year because of budget cutbacks and we are trying to replace annual with perennial that come back every year and maybe not cost as much.
- We are looking at adding a number of recycling unit at the same location as trash cans to began our recycle program here. We can not do it everywhere because we have over 200 trash cans and would be impossible to do them all at the same time.
- They are looking to increase bicycle racks in downtown Silver Spring and welcome suggestions.
- Distributed the Kiosk schedule for 2008 and make modification from time to time depending on staffing levels and depend.
- We received complaints about the stones in the tree pits and narrow sidewalks on Fenton Street Village. DHCA did the streetscape improvements a number of years ago and will install tree grates next week. The Fenton Street mid-block between Wayne Avenue and Ellsworth has a new mid-block crosswalk.
- We continue to work on a computerized system for work orders, reporting and information resource for our goodwill ambassadors. We anticipate implementation Fall 2008.

Directors Report

Gary Stith reported that:

- The Fountain at Silver Plaza has passed its test and children are allowed to play in it.
- The Civic Building, the QSC Committee is reviewing the proposal and hopes to post the contractor they have selected in a week to 10 days and negotiate the contract with them and we will call a stakeholders meeting to look at the deduct and add alternate and we have been discussing taking some of both and we will go over this before a final decision is made. The groundbreaking should be in July. We will put signs up and have a Committee together that includes the Police, Petersons, Silver Spring Regional Center, Urban District to discuss what we are going to do once the area is closed off for construction and all the children that hangout there and how to manage that since it will reduce the amount of area for them to hangout.
- Silver Place Design process meeting on May 19th, at Park and Planning to discuss the design process. The charette's are scheduled for the week of June 3 - June 7 at Crowne Plaza.

Meeting adjourned

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